

# Rail industry hails “bold” new Elizabeth line

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Huge numbers celebrated the opening of the brand new Elizabeth line, with many members of the public queuing overnight to catch a ride on one of its first trains.

Among the many also sharing in the excitement those who helped make it happen.

Talking to Richard Clinnick, our Inside Track editor, the Commissioner for Transport for London, Andy Byford, said he was “super proud” of the team who helped deliver the project. He said: “The main thing is I’m just so happy to see the reaction of my customers.

“The people are absolutely amazed at the speed at the service, the beauty of the stations, the smoothness and quietness of the ride. This is a true game changer for London.”

Representing more than 300 members of the UK’s supply chain, the Railway Industry Association (RIA) has welcomed the Elizabeth Line as a “bold” project which will deliver a crucial boost to rail’s future and drive economic growth for the whole country.

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- **New Tube map published including Elizabeth line**
- **Queen makes surprise visit to mark Elizabeth line completion**

Darren Caplan, chief executive of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), commented: “The Elizabeth line really is an exceptional achievement for TfL, Government and the UK railway industry. It is a bold project that will not only transform how passengers travel across London, but it will also boost economic growth for the capital and the country as a whole.

“Railway businesses from all over the UK have played a key role in making this landmark project happen, whether train manufacturing in Derby, station construction in the East Midlands, signalling expertise from Chippenham and Stockport, or telecoms in London. Furthermore, the scheme has supported thousands of skilled railway jobs and significant investment in other parts of the economy beyond rail.

“With passengers now returning there is a strong long-term future for rail, and the Elizabeth line will make that future even brighter.”

The project makes good use of Siemens Mobility Communications-Based Train Control (CBTC) and rail systems technology. Michael Peter, CEO of Siemens Mobility said: “We are so proud to have contributed to this landmark project, one which will significantly transform mobility in London and across southeast England. Our digital signalling and station management technologies are transforming the everyday journeys of Elizabeth line passengers in London and the South East and we’re proud that much of the technology was developed and tested in the UK. The railway has capacity for over 200 million passengers per year and it will provide an enhanced travelling experience featuring superior service reliability and availability.”

The operator of the Elizabeth line is MTR. Chief executive officer of MTR UK, Steve Murphy, said: “We have been working closely with multiple partners towards this goal including TfL, Crossrail, Network Rail, and Alstom, and are excited to reach this historic milestone that will greatly enhance connectivity while helping to drive the capital’s economic recovery.

“I am particularly pleased for two groups of people that this day has arrived. Firstly, for Londoners who have always been so supportive of this immense project and secondly, for our outstanding colleagues at MTREL who I’ve been privileged to work alongside. Commencing services on the Elizabeth line would not have been possible without their considerable effort and expertise and I’m incredibly proud of their achievements.”

MTR Elizabeth line’s managing director, Nigel Holness, added: “We are committed to delivering the highest standards of operational reliability and efficiency for our passengers and look forward to welcoming customers onto the new Elizabeth line. I would like to thank all our MTR Elizabeth line colleagues for their hard work leading up to the opening of the line and for their ongoing dedication to serving our local communities.”

## Transparency, challenges and lessons for the future

Meanwhile, Andrew Baldwin, head of public affairs at the Association for Project Management (APM), says: “Successful projects deliver meaningful change for the benefit of their users. Crossrail will benefit millions of people and add an estimated £42bn to the UK economy. Crossrail will shorten journey times in and around London, while also improving transport links, supporting wider regeneration and creating jobs and business opportunities across the UK. We’re therefore pleased to see phase one of Crossrail completed with the opening of the Elizabeth Line in time for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations. We hope that users start seeing the benefit of the completed project soon.

“All major projects will have challenges across their lifespan. This £19bn megaproject has faced unique challenges because the world has changed in several fundamental ways since the project commenced. Changes to the project’s budget and schedule have been well documented. It’s to the credit of Crossrail’s leadership team that they have demonstrated transparency. With two phases of the project still to be delivered, it’s essential that lessons learned are applied to ongoing work. As the chartered membership organisation for the project profession, we’ve already worked with Crossrail on learning legacies and can support further by working with our Corporate Partners to facilitate knowledge-exchange so that Crossrail – and future projects – can deliver planned economic and social benefits.”